

Sample Progress Memo

To: Jane Dunphy
From: Bill Yao
Subject: Listening and Speaking Observations
Date: February 07, 2007

This memo documents the LLARC and extra-curricular activities that have challenged my listening and speaking skills in the past two weeks.

LLARC Activities

I have completed the exercises in Chapters 1-6 of *Grant's Well Said*. I encountered several difficulties:

- 1) I realize that I have comprehension problems with some sounds if the context is unclear. For example, I found it hard to differentiate between the words cup and cop in the tapes in the following sentence: What is the difference?
- 2) I also had trouble pronouncing the vowels in doll, dull, and fool accurately.
- 3) In addition, glottal stops in expressions like "uh-oh" are almost impossible.
- 4) In listening to myself, I found that I am careless in pronouncing word endings.

Extra-curricular Activities

I went to a departmental retreat last weekend. There were quite a few presentations on subjects with which I am not familiar. Some of the speakers were not native English speakers. I tried to compare the talks given by those people and realized that it was not the accent that made the presentations difficult to understand, but the lack of stress and rhythm in the sentences. It was also interesting to meet various Americans with different dialects. Some dialects were stronger than others.